Tackling extremist forces in North East

1750. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what latest strategies Government have adopted to fight the menace perpetrated by extremist forces of North East Region like ULFA, BLT, NDF (B), NSCN (IM), NSCN (K), TNV, etc.;

(b) whether Government are planning to have peace talks with these organisations; and

(c) if not, whether Government are making plans to strike at the terrorist organisations with some harsh laws and to use structures like unified command?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI l.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) The Government has taken various steps to fight against the militancy in the North Eastern States. These include, *inter-alia,* deployment of para-military forces and army in the States, coordinated action by army, para-military forces and State Police for counter militancy operations, declaration of major militant groups as unlawful associations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967; declaration of militancy affected States as disturbed area under the Armed Forces (Special powers) Act, 1958; reimbursement of security related expenditure to the State Governments and modernization/upgradation of State Police Force. Regular review of the situation both at State and Central Government level is being made.

The Government has extended an invitation to all those who have strayed from the paths of togetherness to come forward for talks within the four corners of our Constitution. Union Government have entered into ceasefire agreements with National Socialist Council of Nagaland (I/M faction) [NSCN (I/M)] on 25th July, 1997 and with Khaplang faction [NSCN(K)] on 28th April, 2001. In Assam, the Bodo Liberation Tiger (BLT) has come forward for peace talks abjuring the path of violence. Kuki National Army (KNA) of Manipur has offered for negotiation with Government. Other militant outfits have not responded for talks within the parameters indicated.

Expert group to look into Bio-terrorism threats

1751. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have formed any expert group of scientists and officials of investigating agencies to look into bio-terrorism threats as the FBI had been doing in the USA;